



Associated Press

President Carter and former classmate Adm. Stansfield Turner meet at the White House last week.

Admiral Who Would Take CIA Helm

Turner Is 'Almost an Original'

New York Times News Service

As president of the Naval War College from 1972 to 1974, Adm. Stansfield Turner kept a sign on his door that read: "I need one good idea a day."

It was characteristic of a man whom his associates and friends describe as endlessly curious about philosophy, theater, opera, international politics and military affairs.

"He is quite a remarkable military officer, almost an original," said a war college associate, and F.J. Bing, another professor at the college, spoke of him as "highly imaginative and extremely energetic."

Turner, 53, whom President Carter designated yesterday as his choice to head the CIA and to function as his director of central intelligence, was an all-round student of the world around him as early as his high school days in Highland Park, Ill.

HE WAS NEAR the top his class wherever he studied.

There is one side to Turner which a naval associate described as "breezy and informal," and another which he said made one "not mistake for one minute that he is an admiral."

When he commanded the 2nd Fleet in 1974 in the Atlantic, he would make surprise visits to his ships by helicopter. Before landing he would toss a life preserver into the ocean and then demand that the crew "show what they could do" about a putative man overboard on instant notice.

The associate from his days at the Newport, R.I., war college described this as a continuation of "shakeup politics" he had instituted on his arrival. His first day there he told the students to "feel right at home" and show their families around the campus. After this lulling start he said: "Report back to the first class in one hour."

The shakeup proceeded with his demand that the college serve not as "a year off" from naval duty, but a program involving tough examinations in strategy, tactics, analysis and management.

These practices and his own penchant for a heavy intellectual diet did not endear Turner to all of his peers.

But he won respect at Newport for innovations, such as a series of humanities lectures by outsiders, including his friend, Herman Wouk, author of the Caine Mutiny. An evening at the Turner household, a colleague recalled, was likely to include a politician or a historian.

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ONE OF HIS GUESTS at a college seminar was the Georgia governor, Jimmy Carter, who was his classmate at the Naval Academy in the accelerated class of 1947, which finished a year early.

Carter and Turner were classmates at the U.S. Naval Academy, Turner graduating 25th in the class of 820 and the President, 59th. But the President told his cabinet yesterday that, "I never knew him" at Annapolis — that Turner "was so far ahead of us" in accomplishments as a midshipman that "we never considered him a competitor or even a peer."

Carter, in an extraordinarily warm burst of praise, said of the admiral, "I have never known a better military person," adding that he was someone who "in the future could be the next George Marshall," a reference to the Army chief of staff in World War II who went on to serve as secretary of state and of defense.

Turner had come to the Navy by way of the Naval Reserve at Amherst College, which he attended from 1941 to 1943. At Annapolis, he was brigade commander, the top cadet position. He served on a carrier and a cruiser, and then won a Rhodes Scholarship. At Oxford University he studied philosophy, politics and economics, receiving a masters degree in arts in 1950.

HE WAS ON destroyers during the Korean War, during which he earned a Bronze Star and other service medals. He commanded a guided missile frigate in the Vietnam conflict.

His shore duty included two tours in defense systems analysis at the Pentagon. He was appointed commander in chief of Allied Forces in Southern Europe in August 1975.

Turner spent part of his career in weapons systems analysis and, thus, in study of strategic deterrence.

He was born Dec. 1, 1923, in Highland Park, a prosperous suburb of Chicago, the son of a real estate broker.

He was elected class president in his sophomore year of high school and was a football letterman.

At Annapolis he also made the football team despite his relatively short stature, and played left guard. He continues to enjoy sports — playing tennis and squash and swimming when he has a chance.

HE MARRIED the former Patricia Busy Whitney in 1953. Their son, Geoffrey, is a Navy lieutenant stationed in Maryland, and their daughter, Laurel, is married. The Turners recently became grandparents.

Turner does not smoke, drinks rarely and works long days, his associates report.

In the debate on the balance of forces between the Soviet union and the United States, Turner is on the side opposite "the quantifiers" among U.S. policymakers who have attempted to measure strengths in numbers of ships, missiles and planes. He prefers to judge long-range trends, as his article on "The Naval Balance" in the January edition of Foreign Affairs illustrates.

"Focus on trends rather than statistics will make the dialogue on the naval balance more substantial and constructive," he wrote.